

that if you pass this law, this many lives will be saved. After Newtown and after this tragedy, I come back to the same question: Is there nothing we can do legislatively? We are the most powerful country in the world. We led the world in winning World War II, a war that was not on its way to winning until we got involved, until we were forced to respond because we were attacked. We are the country that has cured disease and built the strongest Republic in the history of the human race; that has the strongest military, without a doubt; that has the strongest economy, without a doubt; that has so much in ways that we can point to of American exceptionalism and strength and achievement—achievements that are unmatched anywhere in the world in almost any part of American life that one can point to. Is that same country completely disabled from taking an action that would reduce the likelihood—and we would hope substantially reduce the likelihood—that we will not have another Las Vegas or another Orlando or another Newtown, and go on and on from there, all of these tragedies in all of these places? Is that really what our answer is going to be?

We take action when we are attacked, to fight back and to prevent it from happening again. We take action when there is an epidemic. We take action when there is a crisis. We take action when there is a natural disaster. We are seeing some of that most recently. We take action as a government. The Congress takes action. The executive takes action. Yet, in this circumstance, what can only be described as an epidemic—that might be an understatement—where we are losing more than 30,000 people a year, are we saying that there is nothing we can do legislatively to reduce that likelihood? I don't think any American, if they think about it, would conclude there is nothing we can do.

So when I considered that in the context of Sandy Hook, I had to ask myself: Are you saying to yourself that you are going to vote no on what became three bills, vote no on them because you believe there is nothing you can do? That is what your vote is going to be? That is going to be your response? As a legislator with the opportunity to cast a vote in a body of 100 people, you are going to say no three times, as it turned out in 2013, to legislation because you believe there is nothing your vote and nothing this legislative body can do?

Well, I decided to vote yes, at least, but even that is not enough. We haven't had votes in years on these issues. Here we are, almost 5 years later—in December it will be 5 years, half a decade—since Newtown, CT, since the massacre at Sandy Hook.

I have a page from the Wall Street Journal that was printed within a couple days of that tragedy. It had very small color pictures and very small biographies of those very small people,

those 6-year-olds and 7-year-olds. It has been on my desk all of these years, and it is a very yellowed copy of a newspaper article. I often think about what those families have gone through all of these years.

The great recording artist Bruce Springsteen had a song after September 11. The name of the song is "You're Missing." The refrain in that song, of course, is "You're missing," talking about someone, of course, who lost a loved one on 9/11. He says: "You're missing when I turn out the lights, you're missing when I close my eyes, and you're missing when I see the sun rise." The same could be said of those Newtown families, the same could be said of those families in Orlando, and now, unfortunately and tragically, the families in the Las Vegas area—and maybe well beyond Las Vegas—who were there for that concert.

I hope this will be an occasion not just for speeches and expressions of condolence and commendation for those who showed such bravery in this tragedy, or prayers and solidarity, but that this will be a time for action, meaning action in the context of debate and action in the context of legislation.

I think there are a number of steps we can take—I will not outline them all now—a number of commonsense steps we can take that are entirely consistent with the Second Amendment but would reduce the likelihood over time of having more and more of these tragedies or maybe, just maybe, taking action that will reduce the number of deaths. Even that would be substantial progress. I just cannot accept the idea that there is absolutely nothing we can do legislatively to reduce the likelihood—and I would hope substantially reduce the likelihood—of these tragedies so that we can prevent or at least reduce the number of tragedies.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to legislative session and be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNIZING NORTHERN KENTUCKY UNIVERSITY'S SALMON P. CHASE COLLEGE OF LAW

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, today I wish to celebrate a special anniversary in my home State. The Salmon P. Chase College of Law at Northern Kentucky University, NKU, is marking

its 125th year of educating students and helping them follow their dreams in the legal field.

Chase's story is one of transformation and innovation, and through it all, the school has produced graduates prepared to excel in the legal field. Originally founded in Ohio, Chase was only the third law school in the Nation to offer night programs. Since then, Chase has crossed the Ohio River into Kentucky, joined with NKU, and continued to find the best ways to grow as a respected institution.

Named after Salmon P. Chase, the sixth Chief Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court, the college is known as the Lawyer's School for its commitment to helping students be practice-ready upon graduation. Today Chase is a proud part of Kentucky's legal community. With graduates in a wide range of careers, including serving as Federal judges and as Members of Congress, Chase's impact has grown considerably since its founding. It is also the proud home to a nationally recognized moot court team and has led the Commonwealth in the bar exam passage rate in recent years.

These successes wouldn't be possible without the dedicated work of Chase's faculty, staff, and administration. I would like to extend my sincere congratulations to Jeffrey Standen, who serves as dean and professor at Chase. Under his leadership, Chase has continued its growth, innovation, and achievement. The school's distinguished faculty come from some of the highest levels of the bench and bar with the experiences and passion to prepare students for success in their careers. The school's alumni, more than 5,000 and counting, are using their skills in more than 47 States, in Washington DC, and around the globe.

I would also like to thank NKU's interim president Gerard St. Amand, a current professor and former dean of Chase himself, for his commitment to the university and his willingness to help guide the community.

Each time I have had the opportunity to engage with Chase students, I have noted their intellectual curiosity and their passion for the law.

The Chase College of Law has grown so much in the last 125 years, and it has become an integral part of Kentucky's legal community. I am proud to join with the Chase students, faculty, staff, administration, and alumni to commemorate this occasion. I urge my colleagues to help me celebrate Chase's quasiquintennial anniversary, and I look forward to many more years of accomplishments.

CONFIRMATION OF HEALTH TARBERT AND CFIUS REFORM

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I would like to take a few moments to congratulate Heath Tarbert, who was confirmed by the Senate last Wednesday and will soon be serving as Assistant Secretary of the Treasury for International Markets and Development,